



The President's Daily Brief

January 7, 1976

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ANGOLA

In response to strong appeals from Zairian President Mobutu, South Africa has decided to delay the withdrawal of its troops from Angola, at least until after the Organization of African Unity summit.

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A South African military official [redacted]

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[redacted] stated yesterday that South African troops would remain until Pretoria can "determine the outcome" of the summit. After that, the official stated, Pretoria will withdraw unless it receives African or West European support in Angola. He also said that South Africa plans to ask within the next few days for Zairian air force support for the National Front in northern Angola.

Mobutu apparently has some hope that a future South African pull-out can be traded off for a Cuban and Soviet withdrawal. Most African nations, however, do not equate the South African and Cuban-Soviet roles. At least some OAU members--perhaps enough to give the Popular Movement majority support--may regard the idea as blackmail and react by recognizing the Popular Movement.

Although Pretoria apparently is willing to go along with Mobutu for a few days, South African officials are sensitive to the political damage their assistance is doing to the National Union and National Front to maintain their legitimacy in the eyes of the other African nations. The South Africans believe that, in the long run, loss of that legitimacy could be more damaging to Pretoria's interests in Angola than a military withdrawal now.

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The presence of high-level Cuban diplomatic missions in Africa just before the meeting of the Organization of African Unity on January 10 indicates that Havana is making a major effort on behalf of the Popular Movement and in defense of its own military involvement in Angola.

A delegation headed by Osmani Cienfuegos, the Communist Party's top official concerned with Africa and the Middle East, met President Ngouabi of Congo on January 1. The same mission has visited Nigeria and is likely to go on to other African countries. Another mission, led by Cuba's UN ambassador, was scheduled to arrive in Ethiopia on January 3. The Nigerian visit evidently was successful; Lagos yesterday issued a strongly worded pro-Cuban, pro-Soviet, and anti-US statement.

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China recently has registered disappointment with some Third World supporters of the Soviet-backed Popular Movement in Angola, but apparently has not attempted to bring any major diplomatic pressure to bear on them.

Despite Peking's continued public stance of neutrality, most Third World countries recognize that Chinese sympathies lie with the National Front and National Union. China realizes that any heavy-handed efforts on its part to affect developments in Angola would not only antagonize individual governments but would facilitate Moscow's efforts to depict Peking as colluding with the US and South Africans. A representative of the official Chinese news agency recently said that Peking had concluded that Angola was more vital to Western interests than to China and that there was little it could do to change the situation there.

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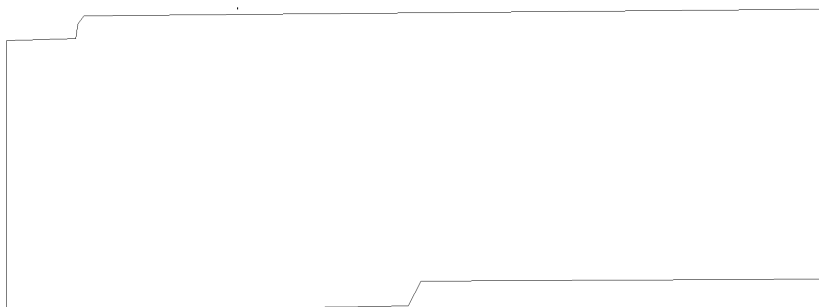
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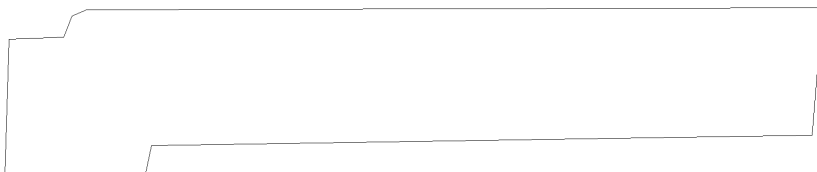
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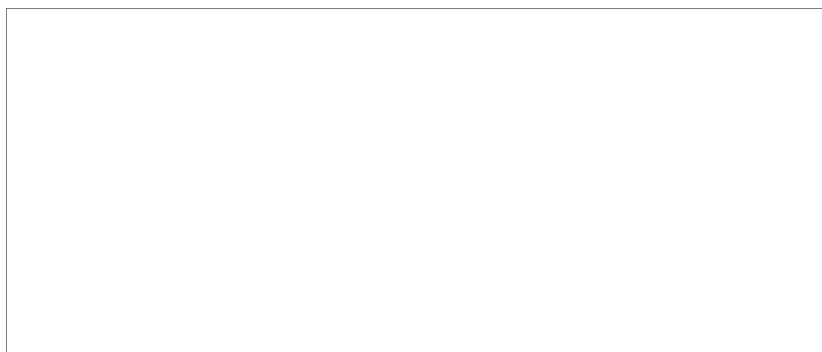
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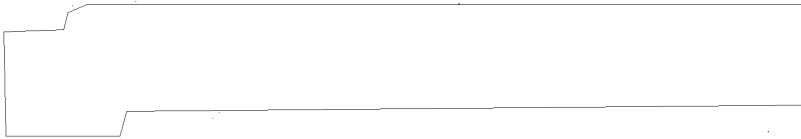


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ISRAEL

Prime Minister Rabin has narrowly restricted Foreign Minister Allon's mandate for his talks in Washington this week to a discussion of tactics for the debate in the UN Security Council on the Middle East problem, according to our embassy in Tel Aviv. Despite Allon's desire to broach other topics, Rabin has made it clear that he is reserving the broader foreign policy issues for his own visit to the US later this month.

Israel's prime concern is to forestall any action by the council that would enhance the status of the Palestinians as potential participants in future peace talks. The Israelis take it for granted that the US would veto any effort to change the essentials of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, which Israel maintains are the sole basis for Arab-Israeli peace negotiations.

The Israelis are much less confident that Washington would block an attempt by the Arabs to pass a moderately worded council resolution calling for consideration of the rights of the Palestinians. The Israelis contend that such a statement would significantly modify resolutions 242 and 338, which explicitly treat the Palestinian issue as a refugee problem. They fear that it might open a door allowing the Palestine Liberation Organization to be brought into Arab-Israeli negotiating at some later date. The Israelis insist the Palestinian issue can only be dealt with in peace negotiations with Jordan.

Allon, in his talks here, can be expected to press hard for assurances that Washington also will oppose any such Arab maneuver. The Israeli minister will suggest that the US support Israel's recent call for a resumption of the Geneva conference to consider the Palestinian and other issues. The Palestine Liberation Organization, with which Tel Aviv refuses to negotiate, is not a party to the conference.

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Rabin probably has some misgivings about sending Allon to Washington to argue Israel's hard-line position, particularly on the Palestinian question. Allon considers this issue to be central in peace negotiations with the Arabs and makes no secret of his advocacy of a more flexible approach. In recent weeks this attitude has openly put him at odds with Rabin, who insists that this is not the time to alter Israel's long-held position. Along with most Israeli leaders, Rabin considers the Arabs' refusal to recognize the existence of Israel as the root cause of the Middle East conflict.

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[REDACTED] Allon, however, is not able to initiate major foreign policy shifts. In the cabinet he ranks below Rabin and Defense Minister Peres in influence. In the key areas of US-Israeli relations and Arab-Israeli negotiations, Prime Minister Rabin is in reality his own foreign minister.

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Allon is clearly frustrated by his limited influence and by the Prime Minister's penchant for personally handling the most important aspects of Israeli foreign relations. A major but not dominant national leader, he remains a team player who is not prepared to carry his differences with Rabin to the point of precipitating a government crisis.

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ITALY

The Socialist Party directorate is meeting today and tomorrow to decide whether to bring down the Moro government by withdrawing the party's crucial parliamentary support.

While a compromise to avoid a government collapse is still possible, most evidence suggests that the Socialists will follow through on their threat to topple Moro. If their resolve holds, the Socialists will have to reconcile internal differences over how best to profit from the ensuing search for a new government.

Some--they appear to be a minority at this stage--want to push for early elections, on the theory that only the Christian Democrats and Communists will benefit if the legislature stays its full term into 1977. Others seem inclined to press for a new caretaker government--an all-Christian Democratic cabinet for example--that would be pledged to give more weight to Socialist views. The Socialists are likely to insist also that any new government consult more openly with the Communist Party in order to limit the latter's ability to profit electorally from its opposition status.

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NOTES

The Moroccans continue to hold a Soviet fishing trawler at the port of Agadir.

A Moroccan patrol boat is moored alongside, and armed guards reportedly have cordoned off the area to prevent anyone from boarding. The cargo and the crew are still on board, and the Soviet captain has refused to allow his ship to be inspected until authorized by the Soviet embassy. The Soviets thus far have made no public announcement of the seizure, and both sides appear to be minimizing the incident. The Kresta II class cruiser that left the Mediterranean on Sunday in apparent reaction to the seizure evidently will not become involved. It was located early today about 400 miles southwest of Agadir.

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Japan and the Soviet Union probably view Foreign Minister Gromyko's five-day trip to Tokyo, which begins on Friday, as a holding action, with no real improvement in relations likely.

Gromyko's visit is one of a series of periodic consultations with Japan and has been planned for some time. It was apparently delayed by Soviet concern that Tokyo would accept Peking's terms for signing a peace treaty with China. The Soviets now seem satisfied that agreement on the treaty is not imminent, and both Moscow and Tokyo consider it in their interest to maintain the semblance of a dialogue.

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